

Chapter 11

The Plan Summary

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The information presented in this plan and strategies indicated on Map 11.1 will assist current and future decision-makers with development, preservation, and zoning decisions over the next five to ten years. These recommendations do not supersede the current zoning map or ordinance.

11.2 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Future non-residential development in Mentor should continue to be concentrated in two primary areas: Tyler Blvd. corridor for manufacturing / light industrial uses and the Mentor Ave. corridor for retail and limited office uses. While vacant industrial land exists, speculative building, albeit not directly controlled by the City, may dilute the marketing of existing facilities. To the extent possible, larger vacant parcels should be designated for those future uses that are unforeseen in the current marketplace.

New retail, hospitality (hotels, restaurants, and entertainment), office, and potential white collar industrial type uses should be the target for the emerging business node at the Diamond Center. Nearby residential developments, current improvements to Heisley Road, and planned upgrades to SR 2 and the new interchange along SR 44 will enhance the accessibility of this area.

Mentor Avenue will continue to be a commercial retail destination for consumers and potential businesses. There is a sufficient amount of existing commercial opportunities (built and vacant land) available along the corridor. This plan does not recommend large-scale rezoning for commercial activities. Additional commercial land on the fringes of the traditional retail corridor may be detrimental to the long-term stability of other areas in the City.

Outlot development and complete on-site redevelopment is encouraged in the commercial core. The Great Lakes Mall may be an ideal location for consideration of a mixed used zoning strategy that incorporates both outlot and onsite redevelopment (see section 11.4). Onsite redevelopment may be applicable for consolidated parcels within the Old Village Area. Redevelopment activities should be in conformance with a detailed master plan of the area and include a consistent, achievable design standard with all buildings regardless of size and potential use.

Professional office, medical facilities, minimal highway convenience, and varying residential styles should continue to be the focus of the Newell Creek area.

In predominately built out communities, similar to Mentor, the remaining vacant land available for residential development may be limited to due size or environmental

constraints. Future developments must be cognizant of the natural characteristics of the site when planning the initial layout and all efforts should be made to preserve these amenities. As discussed in Chapter 4, amendments to the Residential Village Green (RVG) ordinance could strengthen the City's ability to preserve remaining open space areas (riparian corridors, wetlands, woodlands, etc.) in private developments.

Future developments must also be able to meet market demands. For example, the market for traditional larger homes on fee simple lots may decline as the demographic profile of the city changes and homes buyers shift toward condominium style units.

11.3 CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION

Mentor, along with countless environmental groups, has long realized the importance of providing open space, parks and public lake access to their residents. This plan recommends a long-term strategy of creating linkages between existing holdings. When feasible, the fee-simple acquisition of valuable parcels surrounding the Mentor Marina and Nature Preserve, Mentor Marsh, Lake Erie and existing facilities should be considered. Regional collaboration, as exhibited around the Mentor Marsh, is recommended to create a 'vehicular free' network of open recreational access.

During development review activities, the City should encourage:

- Stormwater management techniques that utilize best management practices (vegetated bio-swales, pervious pavement, rain gardens).
- Riparian setbacks along designated watercourses and high quality wetlands.
- Reduced parking or phased parking requirements for large scale commercial projects to reduce the amount of unused impervious surface.
- Small-scale neighborhood parks within walking distance of those who live there. Too often, "Open space" is simply a strip of green around the perimeter of the development, providing minimal useable open space or recreational impact to the community. Regional-scale open space is prevalent in the City, but neighborhood parks could be expanded to serve new development.

11.4 ACTION PLAN

Strategy 1 Monitor permitted uses along Mentor Avenue corridor (B-2)

Action by: Planning staff, Planning Commission
Time: Winter 2009
Beneficiary: Businesses and community

Strategy 2 Establish Community Reinvestment Area (Old Village Area)

Action by: Economic Development
Time: Winter 2009
Beneficiary: Businesses and community

Strategy 3 Amend RVG zoning parameters

Action by: Planning staff and Planning Commission
Time: Winter 2009
Beneficiary: Community, developers

Strategy 4 Review parking requirements in commercial areas

Action by: Planning staff, City Engineer
Time: Winter 2009
Beneficiary: Businesses and community

Strategy 5 Codify uniform commercial design guidelines (Existing document should be used as a template)

Action by: Planning staff
Time: Winter 2009 / 2010
Beneficiary: Businesses and community

Strategy 6 Amend sign ordinance

Action by: Planning staff
Time: Winter 2009 / 2010
Beneficiary: Businesses and community

Strategy 7 Examine a historic overlay for Old Village Area

Action by: Planning staff
Time: 2010
Beneficiary: Businesses and community

Strategy 8 Create mixed use zoning overlay zoning district (Great Lakes Mall/Plaza Blvd.)

Action by: Planning Commission, Zoning staff, elected officials
Time: 2010
Beneficiary: Businesses and community

Strategy 9 Create a feasible point of sale inspection program

Action by: Planning staff, Building Department, Planning Commission, elected officials,
Time: 2010
Beneficiary: Citizens, homebuyers

Strategy 10 Consider long-term bikeway / pedestrian plan

Action by: Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities, elected officials
Time: Long-term
Beneficiary: Citizens, visitors

Strategy 11 Continue enhancements and facility improvements at Mentor Lagoons Nature Preserve and Marina

Action by: Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities, elected officials
Time: Long-term
Beneficiary: Citizens, boating community, visitors

Strategy 12 Create additional public waterfront access and park linkages

Action by: City, citizens, Lake Metroparks, natural resource agencies, elected officials
Time: Long term
Beneficiary: Citizens

Strategy 13 Use PCA/PDA guidance map during development process

Action by: Planning staff, Planning Commission, elected officials, developers, CRWP
Time: Long term
Beneficiary: Planning Commission, citizens, developers, elected officials

11.5 CONCLUSION

The information presented in this plan indicates a long-term vision for the City. The Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for local decision-makers while evaluating, or developing, practical and feasible land use and zoning proposals.

Continued cooperation between local boards, citizens, businesses, city staff, elected officials and other public agencies will increase the likelihood of the plans success. The recommendations of the plan were created by the City of Mentor with guidance by the Lake County Planning Commission and Chagrin River Watershed Partners. Valuable information was also provided by the City of Mentor Capital Improvement Program.

Competition for new development, redevelopment, and economic development is at an all time high. Thus, it is imperative that the Mentor community examine current and proposed guidelines to assure that future growth follows the community's desires.

Market demands, unforeseen development scenarios, or legal issues may arise which require edits to various portions of this plan. Planning is fluid. Amendments, if necessary, should not derail the overall objectives discussed in the plan.

Map 11.1: Comprehensive Plan Map

